

Item: Senate Minutes, December 1999

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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

APPROVED MINUTES

OF

SENATE MEETING

SENATE met in regular session on Monday, December 13, 1999, 4:00 p.m. in University Hall, Macdonald Building.

Present with Mr. C. Stuttard in the chair were the following:

Bell, Benoit, Binkley, Bleasdale, Bradfield, Brett, Coffin, El-Hawary, Emodi, Flood, Fooladi, Furrow, Girard, Gupta, Ipson, Kay-Raining Bird, Kipouros, Lee, Lohmann, MacAulay, N. MacDonald, MacInnis, MacKenzie, Maes, Maloney, McConnell, McIntyre, Pacey, Palermo, C. Powell, H. Powell, Ricketts, Russell, Sastri, Scully, Starnes, Tindall, Traves, Ugursal, Vohra, Wallace, White, Whyte.

Invitees: M. Brooks, R. Huebert, L. MacDougall, D. Stairs.

Regrets: Carlson, Connolly, Cunningham, Galley, Jalilvand, Johnston, B. MacDonald, McAlister, Rathwell.

99:131.

Adoption of the Agenda.

Mr. Stuttard proposed that item 7 be considered as if in Committee of the Whole, given that the Report of the Task Force on Policy and Administration was to the President and Senate was not being asked to adopt it. At the end of the informal discussion any motions arising from that discussion could be presented when the meeting returned to the formal session. Item 11 was an order of the day at 5:40 and would be *in camera*. The agenda was adopted.

99:132.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of November 8, 1999 were adopted as circulated.

99:133.

Vice-President's Response to Questions.

In response to a question from Ms. MacDonald at the previous meeting, Mr. Scully reported that

there were no countries from which Dalhousie would not accept government-sponsored students or students who were paying their own way. In response to Mr. Bradfield's question concerning information technology expenditures reported by SCITPC, Mr. Scully noted that the answer would be available at the next Senate meeting. Mr. Scully also noted that at the July meeting of Senate the Registrar had been requested to report on the issue of median grades and the Banner system. He apologized that the matter had not yet been clarified; he would report on median grades to the January Senate meeting.

99:134.

Question Period.

Mr. Bradfield requested that Senate be provided with a report on the percentage of the Banner staff who were working overtime, and the number of hours those staff were working. Mr. Scully would consider the request. Ms. Mackenzie asked whether anything was being done about the increase in tuition fees for Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, and Pharmacy. Ms. McIntyre understood that the matter had been resolved to the advantage of students, but she would report back to Senate after she had been formally notified of details of the resolution by Mr. Nason.

99:135.

Nomination to the Senate Library Committee

On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Ms. Bleasdale moved:

That Senate approve the nomination of Colin MacLean (Henson College) to the Senate Library Committee for the term December 1999 to June 30, 2001.

After the requisite call for further nominations, Mr. Stuttard declared Mr. Maclean acclaimed.

99:136.

Nominations to the University Tenure and Promotions Panel.

On behalf of the Senate Nominating Committee, Ms. Bleasdale moved that:

That Senate approve the appointment of Stephen Parcell (Architecture), Reginald Goodday (Dentistry), Ismet Ugursal (Engineering), Ezz El-Masry (Engineering), Julia Wong (Health Professions), Esmeralda Thornhill (Law), Leonard Maclean (Management), Duane Guernsey (Medicine), and Marcia Ozier (Science) to serve on the University Tenure and Promotions Panel.

These individuals had received the approval of the President and of the Dalhousie Faculty Association.

The motion was **CARRIED.**

99:137.

Proposed Change in Status - Department of Otolaryngology

On behalf of the Senate Academic Priorities and Budget Committee, Mr. Stuttard moved:

That the Faculty of Medicine's proposal to change the status of its Department of Otolaryngology to that of a Division of Otolaryngology within the Department of Surgery be approved on the understanding that a review of this arrangement shall be done in three years time.

Mr. Powell asked whether this meant the University was going to recognize Divisions within a Department. Mr. Stuttard noted that the University had always recognized Divisions within Departments, but not a Division that was on equal footing with a Department. This motion was to change the status of a Department into a Division within another Department.

The motion was **CARRIED**.

99:138.

The Task Force on Research Policy and Administration.

Mr. Stuttard recognized Mr. Stairs, the Chair of the President's Task Force on Research Policy and Administration, and invited him to introduce the topic for discussion as if in Committee of the Whole. On returning to the formal session, Mr. Stuttard invited Mr. Girard to formally propose his motion. Mr. Girard moved:

That the first thirteen recommendations of the Task Force on Research Policy and Administration be approved in principle.

Ms. Raining-Bird requested clarification as to whether members could discuss each recommendation individually. Mr. Stuttard's understanding of the intent of the motion suggested it might be more appropriate to endorse rather than approve the recommendations. Ms. McIntyre suggested that the motion clarify that the thirteen recommendations under consideration were general recommendations. Mr. Traves thought it would be helpful to rephrase the motion to endorse the spirit and the principle behind the Task Force Report. That would convey appreciation for a job well done and indicate support for the general tenor of the Report, without making a commitment to any specific recommendation or recommendations.

Mr. Girard supported Ms. McIntyre's interpretation of his motion as clarifying the divide between the general and the specific recommendations. On the specific recommendations there would be a continuing dialogue within Senate and its Committees, and it would be helpful for the appropriate Committees to consider recommendations. He accepted Ms. McIntyre's friendly amendment that the motion read:

That Senate endorses the first thirteen general recommendations of the Task Force Report on Research Policy and Administration.

Mr. Ricketts had no difficulty with Senate being asked to accept the Report. But endorsing the Report, even in its generality, seemed premature given the present context: the need to set out the way in which the new Council might be established and the on-going search for a new Vice-President Research. We needed to think more thoroughly about the implications of all of the recommendations. For example, he supported the decentralization of Research Services to Faculties, but wished for fuller consideration of the mechanisms by which the line Faculties could promote and facilitate the general research endeavour of the University without creating Research Offices, as was done in other universities. The Report was valuable in generating discussion of such important issues, but he did not understand the purpose in endorsing something which would develop over a period of time and as a result of further deliberations.

In response to Ms. Bleasdale's request for clarification as to what the motion meant, Mr. Stuttard interpreted it as an expression of Senate's acceptance of the direction set out in the first thirteen general recommendations. Ms. Raining-Bird would be happy to endorse most of the recommendations, but not recommendation five, for example. She found Ms. Binkley's and Ms. McIntyre's presentation of the value of Faculty-based Research Offices helpful and understood the need for mentoring within Faculties, but remained concerned that such Offices might to some extent reduce collaboration and discussion between Faculties. She was not convinced that a centralized Office could not become diversified and offer the expertise necessary to encourage research. Despite their generality, Ms. MacDonald had difficulty with the language in some of the first thirteen recommendations. She supported the concept of Senate accepting the importance of the issues raised for consideration, but she did not believe there was one single solution for every Faculty in some of the areas addressed. Consequently she could not support the motion.

Ms. Powell noted that the Report had come to us for information, without a request for a formal response. In that light, a vote against the motion would not be a statement that we were not happy with it, but simply that at this stage it had not yet become our business. We would take action as aspects of the Report came back to us in the form of concrete motions. The University had gained much from the work of the Task Force and from the present debate. In particular, he was pleased with the President's assurance that the Advisory Council would be advisory and not bureaucratic. But now was not the time for motions. Mr. Emodi saw the Report as advisory to the President, and thought the appropriate course of action might be to thank the President for sharing it with us. He wondered what would happen were Senate to support this document. While he would be happy to support the spirit of the Report, he would have difficulty supporting some of the detail. Recommendation three, for example, was a mixture between advisory and executive functions of the proposed Advisory Council. The monitoring of the impact of policies and procedures, and the fostering of multi-disciplinary research also appeared to be more than advisory. Mr. Wallace would vote against the motion, for the reasons eloquently expressed by Mr. Powell. He considered the motion premature.

The motion was **LOST**.

Mr. Traves believed that the discussion leading up to the motion had been entirely supportive of the main lines of the Task Force Report. Since the Report was advisory to the President, he could inform Senate that he intended to interpret the discussion as significant and the motion as irrelevant, and consequently took no negative message from the defeat of the motion. He had already indicated that he would proceed with an Advisory Council. The issue of Faculty Research Offices was for each Faculty to decide. Mr. Traves would be happy to refer the Task Force to the Senate Steering Committee, which would refer specific business to the appropriate Senate Committees. Any policy matters would be referred to the appropriate bodies within the University. He had found the discussion helpful, but no further Senate motion was needed.

On behalf of Senate, Mr. Stuttard thanked Mr. Stairs for his input.

99:139.

Annual Report of the Senate Committee on the Environment

Mr. Stuttard welcomed Mr. Coté, the Chair of the Senate Committee on the Environment.

Ms. Bleasdale moved:

That the 1998/99 Annual Report of the Senate Committee on the Environment be accepted.

Mr Coté trusted Senators were more comfortable with the Committee's accomplishments this year than they had been when the functioning of the Committee had been questioned approximately eighteen months ago. He believed the Committee had demonstrated its value over the past year. In anticipation of the 1999/2000 Report, Ms. McIntyre noted that we had received the eco-review from the Halifax Regional Municipality which indicated that the residential community was doing very well, but, in contrast, companies and major public corporations and offices were much less successful in resource recovery. Would Dalhousie be stepping up its role in resource recovery in the coming year?

Mr. Coté agreed that the University, like other institutions, could do better; however, his information from the Manager of Environmental Services suggested that Dalhousie had already reached the level of the rest of the community, approximately 50%. That percentage would increase over the next year. But he agreed that we could and should do more in this area. Mr. Whyte asked whether the Environment Committee had been participating in discussions of plans to close University Avenue and create an old-fashioned campus, assuming such plans were still being considered. Mr. Coté responded that the matter had not yet been discussed by his Committee. Mr. Bradfield noted that at the beginning of the 1990s the campus plan had mooted this idea, and the new FASS building had generated some discussion of the possibility of creating blocks of green between the Student Union Building and the new FASS building. However, legal questions remained unresolved.

99:140.

The President's Report

The President had circulated to Senators two documents which were the background to the campaign of the Nova Scotia and Atlantic University Presidents, and other groups such as the Student Union and the Dalhousie Faculty Association, to pressure the Provincial government to continue funding at the promised levels, and the Federal government to expand funding for both research and teaching activities. The document presented to the Provincial government had been submitted to the Voluntary Planning Committee's Fiscal Management Task Force commissioned by the province to advise on budget priorities. The Atlantic Association of Universities' document was presented to the government caucus in Ottawa November 30th. The documents contained much important information about the role of universities in a knowledge economy, and the value of a University education for both individuals and collectivities, particularly in economic terms.

Most of the arguments would be familiar to members of Senate, but he drew members' attention to the opening section of the Nova Scotia document which contained new information concerning the degree to which the province had withdrawn its support from the universities. This withdrawal reflected not simply a decreasing capacity to fund education, but also a lowering of the priority placed on higher education. We needed to continue to press our arguments upon the provincial and federal governments. This was particularly important in light of the BAC XVI Report which some members would have had an opportunity to consider. The Report presented a number of negative, and only one or two relatively positive scenarios.

The President welcomed advice on the arguments within the documents circulated and on the politics of presenting those arguments. He encouraged members to raise these concerns within the community and particularly with government officials.

After consideration of the order of the day concerning honorary degrees, Mr. Bradfield commented that he was happy to see the administration in the various Universities producing this type of document, and suggested they consider submitting sections of the document as a series of op-ed pieces to the local newspapers. Could parts of the document be shortened and submitted to the student newspapers, and could an even shorter version be provided to students along with their grade reports? The latter would provide students and parents with material with which to lobby their elected government representatives.

99:141.

Honorary Degrees

The meeting considered nominations for honorary degrees *in camera*. A ballot to approve individual nominations would be conducted during the next Senate meeting.

99:142.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Secretary

Chair